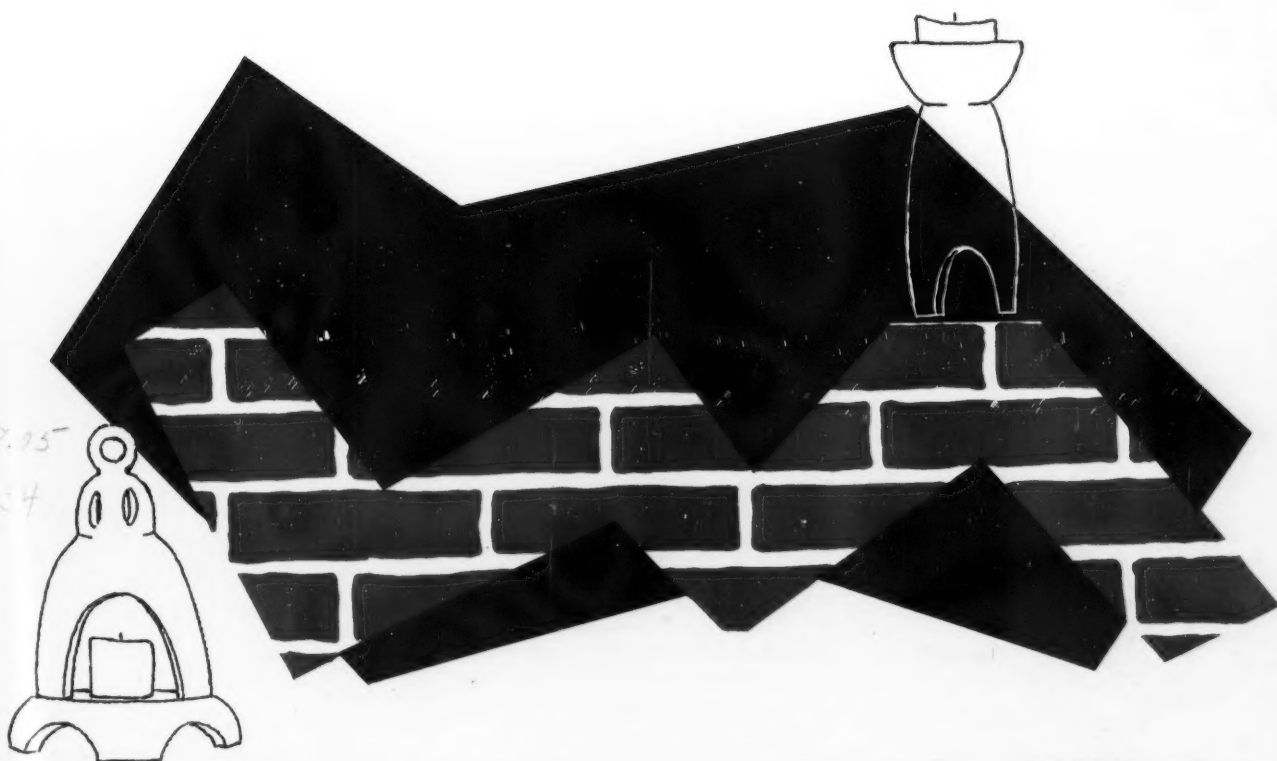


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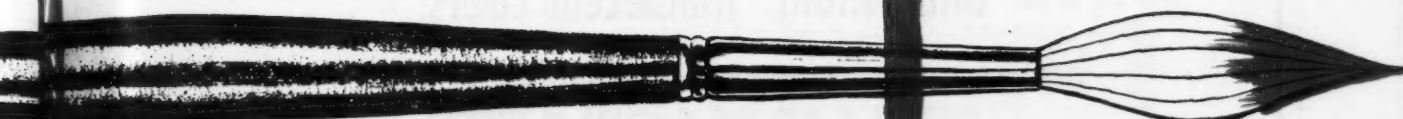
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Ceramics MONTHLY

Volume 5, Number 4

APRIL • 1957

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Editor Louis G. Farber

Business Manager Spencer L. Davis

Assistant Editor Shirley Abrahamson

Editorial Associates Mary Elliott
Thomas Sellers

Art Director Robert L. Creager

Advisors and Special Contributors: Carlton Atherton; F. Carlton Ball; Bee Basch; Kathe Berl; Edris Eckhardt; John Kenny; Zena Holst; Dorothy Perkins; Jo Rebert; Ken Smith; Vera Walkup; Don Wood

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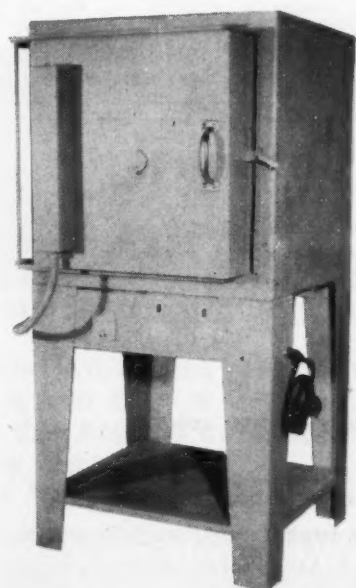
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Letters

EARTHENWARE AND STONEWARE . . .

Dear Editor:

Let me say that I agree with Mrs. Sills ["Open Letter," December]. It is about time someone said something about these Stoneware potters. They think they are the only artists, especially those that judge pottery exhibitions.

It is nice of Mr. Ball to point out that Earthenware can also be beautiful . . . I hope he will remember this if he juries another exhibition.

My friends and I have decided to boycott the ceramic exhibition in Florida this year. We can save work and express charges for we know our poor old Earthenware pieces, that are beautiful to us, don't stand a chance . . . With the evidence of past exhibitions stoneware potters will win the awards.

Mr. Editor, now at last, with these letters you are waking up the down-trodden Earthenware potters. I hope you will give them a chance to be heard.

DICK P. BECKER
Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Editor:

I have read with interest Mrs. Sills' letter in defense of earthenware and Mr. Ball's excellent reply. To me, these items make CM alive—let's have more.

I would like to raise the question about student work being included in national exhibitions; usually student work is controlled by the instructor. Naturally student work would look like the instructor's work. If the teacher is a juror and he

awards his student a prize, isn't he patting himself on the back a bit too much?

I hope you don't limit your letters to the editor too much, for they are just fascinating!

ZORA PEROVICH
St. Louis, Mo.

♦*"Letters to the Editor" on the subject of stoneware, earthenware and jurying continue to arrive. They will not be "limited too much"; we hope their publication will help bring about a meeting of the minds and a constructive conclusion.*

Please remember, all letters must be signed. Names will not be published if you so request, but anonymous letters cannot be considered for publication.—Ed.

QUICK HENRY, THE FRIT

Dear Editor:

A customer ordered Frit #33, and I have been unable to locate a source for it. This is the frit used in making Raku glaze as described in the article, "Make your own Raku," February issue . . .

WILLIAM DYKES
The Potter's Wheel
Westport, Conn.

♦*The red-faced editors regret the omission of this information. Frit #33 is from O. Hommel, Pittsburgh, Penna.—Ed.*

PANS AND FANS

Dear Editor:

Thanks for the efforts you make with CM. I subscribe for my wife who is a studio potter. She studied ceramics in the Academy of Arts in Berlin and always finds some articles which particularly interest her. It is clear that you have to write for thousands of hobbyists as well as a few purists . . . (in order to succeed as a magazine). So I find

that many of the criticisms you receive are not valid for a magazine which strives to serve all tastes.

WERNER WESTPHAL
Colombia, S.A.

Dear Editor:

. . . I would like to add my comments to those of your other subscribers about CM's contents. In the main, I like it very much. However, I, too, have been a little concerned when it seemed that some of your recent issues were going over to the . . . flowered candy box, hobby sort of thing.

Along with many of your original subscribers, I welcomed the advent of your publication as an aid to those of us who are more seriously interested in advancing the scope of pottery and ceramics.

. . . I have found CM to be very helpful and interesting, but would like to see more articles on stoneware, porcelain, architectural and garden uses, bodies, high-fire glazes, . . . and also more advertisements from suppliers of high-fire materials.

So keep up the good work and don't let us down by turning into one of those junky magazines catering to the giftie shoppie sort of ceramics. Leave that to the others.

DORIS ALEXANDER
Pennsburg, Pa.

Dear Editor:

Just wanted to say that my husband and I are avid readers of your magazine. In fact, we just can't wait for the next number to arrive! . . . We are both strictly in the hobby class, and we find CM is almost a "bible" to us . . .

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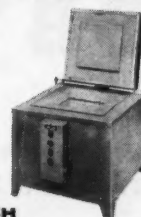


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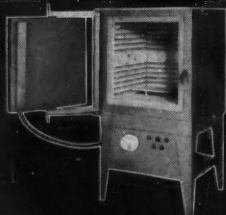


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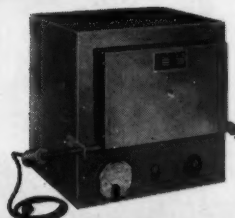
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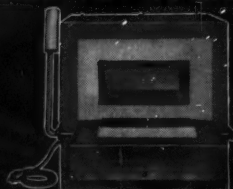
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Photo taken at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday afternoon, opening day of Fourth Annual Eastern Ceramic Show, May, 1956

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Suggestions

from our readers

GLAZE CATCHER

When spraying glazes, you always get over-spray. If you use a large cardboard carton or other improvised spray booth, try draping a sheet of vinyl plastic inside. The overspray will cling to the plastic background; when it dries it is easily brushed off and saved for re-use.

—Peg Townsend
Tucson, Ariz.

BARE-SPOT APPLICATOR

Findings will adhere better to a clay body if the area it is to be glued to is unglazed. An easy way to leave a small, unglazed area on the back of a piece of jewelry is to coat that area with a wax resist



material such as the water soluble waxes (Ceramel A) commonly used for wax resist decoration. It can be brushed on—but here is a simpler way.

Cut a piece of natural sponge to the size of the bare spot desired and fasten it to the end of a small stick. The sponge is dipped into the wax, touched to the ceramic piece and the job is complete.

A particularly handy way to make an applicator is to fill the hole in a bamboo brush handle with toothpicks, then push a straight pin through the tiny sponge circle and into the toothpicks where it is wedged tight.

—Lillian Noble
Nebraska City, Nebr.

MOLD CLEANER

After removing a casting from a mold I wipe the mold with a turkish towel. This

cleans the mold without introducing the danger of scratching. Of equal importance, it eliminates the need for a damp sponge for cleaning which would make the mold wetter and cut down on the number of casts obtainable in one session.

—Mrs. Forrest Witt
Hooker, Okla.

TILE DRYER

To dry handmade tiles without warping, place the wet tiles between plaster bats. If the tiles are quite large and the bats small, a weight on the top bat will prove helpful.

—Bim & Doris Newman
Babylon, N.Y.

SPOUT ENLARGER

I find a dampened pipe cleaner to be an excellent tool for enlarging the pouring spout of a cast tea pot. These are particularly needed when the tea pot has been cast rather heavily. The pipe cleaners are flexible and will not damage the green ware.

—Mrs. Walter Lade
Kearney, Nebr.

CLAY DECORATOR

A small piece of wire window screening can make interesting decorations on leather-hard clay. Merely wrap a

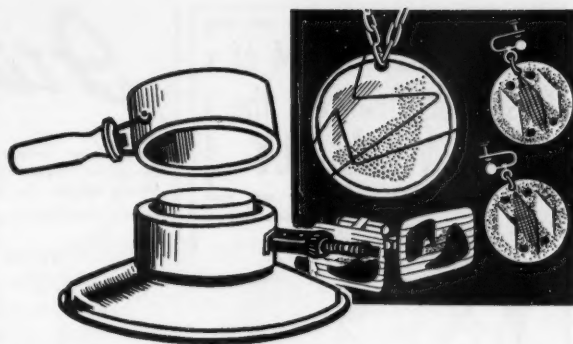


small piece around the forefinger and see what you can do by pressing and scraping.

—Mrs. A. H. Sanders
Ft. Worth, Tex.

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Itinerary

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WHERE TO SHOW ★national competition

CONNECTICUT, NEW CANAAN June 7-July 10

Eighth Annual New England Exhibition sponsored by Silvermine Guild of Artists at the Silvermine Guild School of Art. Open to residents of the New England states and New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Ceramic sculpture included in a juried exhibition; \$4,000 in prizes. Work due May 2. Entry fee, \$4 to non-members. For prospectus, write the Silvermine Guild of Artists.

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS May 12-June 9

Fourth Biennial Indiana Ceramic Exhibition at the John Herron Art Museum. Categories include creative ceramics and decorated ceramics. Open to Indiana residents. Jury; cash prizes. Entries due April 23; entry blanks by April 22. Write to the Museum for blanks.

NEW YORK, DOUGLSTON May 19-June 1

*27th Annual Spring Exhibition of the Art League of Long Island. For all artists. Mediums include small sculpture and ceramics. Fee: \$10, includes membership; \$5 for non-members. Entry forms and work due April 27. For details write to Woodward Dillon, Chairman, 44-21 Douglaston Pkwy.

WHERE TO GO

CANADA, TORONTO April 3-April 28

"Canadian Ceramics of 1957," sponsored by The Canadian Guild of Potters and The Canadian Handicraft Guild. All-Canada exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO through April 24

Midwest Designer-Craftsmen Exhibition at Art Institute of Chicago. Represents wide geographic area designated as the Mississippi Basin.

IOWA, CEDAR FALLS through May 5

"American Jewelry and Related Objects II," Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition, at Department of Art, Iowa State Teachers College.

KANSAS, WICHITA April 13-May 20

The 12th National Decorative Arts and Ceramic Exhibition at the Wichita Art Association, 401 North Belmont Avenue. Ceramics, jewelry, ceramic sculpture, and enamel included in media.

KANSAS, WICHITA April 24-28

Wichita Ceramic Art Society show at Kansas National Guard Armory, 620 N. Edgemoor.

(Please turn to Page 30)

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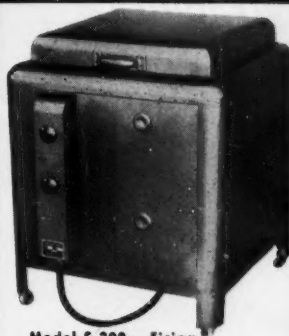
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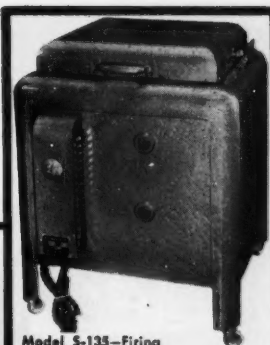
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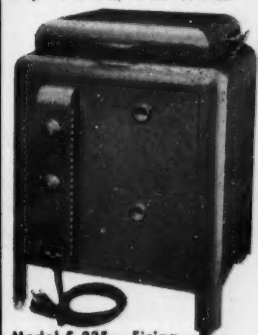
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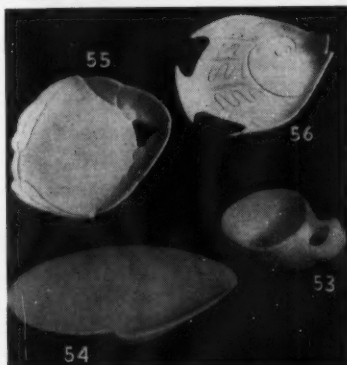
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ANTIQUE POTTERY for inspiration

by BIM and DORIS NEWMAN

The creative potter seeks out the pottery of all cultures as a source of inspiration. In our museums he can find the finest pieces from many periods on display but unfortunately these must be seen through glass. This does not satisfy the potter. He wants to *hold* the pot, touch its surface, turn it over, run his hand along the inside.

To gratify this need, he may buy a few pieces by contemporary craftsmen. There is another, earlier source he might also turn to, and this is the work of American potters of the nineteenth century, whose pieces are easily found, inexpensive to buy, and represent the closest thing we have to a tradition in pottery.

These unpretentious jugs, crocks, and bowls, which were made for daily use, have found their way to antique shops throughout the country. They can be bought usually for a dollar or two. To the dealer such pieces are not valuable, since technically they are not old enough to be classified as real antiques. In addition, the antique-buying public generally prefers porcelain, even over-decorated and grotesquely shaped porcelain, to the simple forms and subdued colors of the potter's ware.

For an appreciation of functional design—the beauty inherent in a jug or crock which took its form from its intended use—let's look at a few examples of early American pottery.

Salt-Glazed Stoneware Jug, Ozark Mountain Region

This is a wheel-thrown piece with a dark olive glaze over a buff body. The fine proportions of this jug, pictured at right, indicate the potter's sensitivity to form, balance, and unity. The pulled handle appears to grow out of the lip, and has a free-flowing plastic

(Please Turn the Page)

***DESIGN TAKES ITS CUE FROM USAGE.
EARLY AMERICAN EARTHENWARE
HAS INHERENT BEAUTY AND GRACE.***



Photos: Harold Harris

A typical antique shape, this salt-glazed stoneware jug from the Ozark Mountains combines balance, unity and form. Further details are given in the accompanying text.



Two-gallon crock described below.

quality which is well related to the powerful curves of the jug. Thrown directly on the wheel head, this piece was cut off at the base with a wire or string which left indentations in the soft clay.

Two-Gallon Crock, Upstate New York (pictured above)

Gray salt-glazed stoneware crocks with Albany slip inside were typical of New York potteries of the last century. The design was painted with cobalt on green ware. The chicken pecking corn represented here is a clue to the original use of the piece. Eggs were stored in the crock, submerged in egg preserver (the same sodium silicate which present-day potters use to deflocculate slip). The proportions of the crock are not particularly good because of the very heavy lip and the handles which are too thin.

Covered Earthenware Jar, Long Island

Acquiring this jar was a piece of good fortune, for it has its original cover, a rarity in old pottery. Both the bottom of the cover and the bottom of the jar show an identical spiral pattern caused by the string which the potter used to cut them from the wheel head. A semi-matt brown glaze covers the piece inside and out. There is a flat inset lid with a small domed knob. The neck and lip of the jar are sharply defined. The entire piece is sur-



prisingly light in weight, due to thin walls and a porous body.

Black Whiskey Jug, New York

There is a fatty black lustrous glaze on this small jug. Although the shape is extremely common, this piece has a rare plastic quality. Finger ridges are pleasantly irregular. The soft clay of the pulled handle was pressed firmly to the jug, leaving an indentation of the potter's thumb where the handle was attached. The total effect of the piece is a feeling of relaxation.



Shoo-Fly-Pie Plates, Pennsylvania Dutch

These stoneware plates are particularly interesting because they can be stacked, both for firing and storage.



The lip and outside were left unglazed to permit stacking in the kiln. The insides were glazed with beautiful amber to red-brown glossy glazes, on a brown body. A press mold was probably used in forming the plates which were made in two sizes, seven and eight-inch diameters. The design is simple and functional, appealing to contemporary and early American tastes.

Wheel-Thrown Red Earthenware Vase

Daubs of manganese were applied to the body as an underglaze decoration. The manganese areas show through as vague black spots in an overall pattern. The jar was dipped in a transparent lead glaze only partially, leaving the bottom third and foot of the piece unglazed. This type of pottery was characteristic of New England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.



Earthenware Skimmer from Pennsylvania

This piece was used for separating cream from milk. The whole milk was left to settle in the skimmer until cream rose to the top, when it was



poured off. The piece is wheel thrown, with hand-formed pouring spout and attached handles. Inside is a brown slip glaze contrasting with the light red body. The slip glaze is peeling due to either moisture which has penetrated through an underfired body, or an unequal coefficient of expansion of body and glaze.

Pitcher, Allegheny Mountains

This skillfully thrown pitcher has an unusual salt glaze. There is no "orange peel" or pitted texture, but rather an uncommon crystalline structure. The color is a blend of transparent to yellow to brown. We have not been able to determine what caused the peculiarity of this glaze.



Notice the generous curve of the belly, the strong lip and pouring spout.

EXAMINING THESE and similar old stoneware and earthenware jugs should give us an appreciation of how usage determines design—and, incidentally, beauty and grace. ●



MORE on the MATTER of MOSAICS

Tips on Making, Glazing
and Assembling Tesserae

by SALLY GALLAWAY

You can make five hundred little tesserae—enough to cover an area of about three square feet—and have them glazed and stacked in the kiln ready for firing, all in just a few hours.

The secret to cutting down on the time ordinarily required for tesserae-making is to eliminate the necessity for handling the miniature pieces involved. This is the way it can be done: simply lay raw-glazed slabs of clay on kiln shelves, cut the slabs in small pieces and without further ado stack the shelves in the kiln for firing.

The method not only does away with the usual time-consuming task of moving the pieces carefully from cutting board to kiln, but also insures the use of every available inch of kiln-shelf space and practically eliminates the danger of chipping and warping the tesserae.

This is the entire procedure:

1. Roll clay into slabs about the size of your kiln shelves. Lift them, with reasonable care, and lay them on plaster bats or a flat board in a warm place.

2. As soon as the clay has lost its shine, spray or brush glaze on the slabs.

3. When the glaze is dry to the touch, transfer the slabs to perfectly smooth, clean, flat kiln shelves (I scrub all loose kiln wash off the shelves, then turn them upside down to receive the slabs).

4. For the cutting operation, use a broad-bladed knife and, as a cutting guide, a smooth stick about one inch wide and 1/4-inch thick. When the glaze does not adhere to the stick and the knife blade goes through the

clay cleanly without distortion, the slab is ready to be cut. Hold the stick firmly down on the slab and run the knife along it. The stick will not only serve as a guide but flatten any piece which has a tendency to warp and also prevent beveled edges.

The tesserae need not be touched after being cut: the thickness of the knife blade separates them sufficiently and the few which may become joined together during firing can usually be snapped apart easily.

5. With a toothpick, remove the tesserae at the corners of the shelf in order to make room for the posts which must support the next shelf. Then stack the loaded shelf in the kiln. (I use 1/2-inch posts between shelves and fire five full shelves, a total of about 500 pieces, at a time in my 11" x 11" x 7" kiln.) Small pieces dry very quickly so the kiln may be fired immediately; it is a good idea, however to leave the kiln door open for the first hour and to fire fairly slowly.

You can see the advantage of the method. Not once during the entire procedure did the tesserae have to be handled!

NOW a word on glazes and a system for assembling a mosaic. Until I read Sister Magdalen Mary's article on mosaics in CER-

AMICS MONTHLY (January 1955) it wouldn't have occurred to me that soft clay could be glazed but I tried it and it worked. I use a white, talc modeling clay for tesserae and most of the glazes which fit this body in the green or bisque stage also work equally well on damp clay. My favorite, however, is a cone 05 mosaic matt glaze (the recipe, with details on colorants, is on page 32).

The system I use for organizing tesserae in a mosaic composition permits arranging and rearranging the pieces until the desired effect is achieved and then cementing the composition in place as a whole rather than piece by piece.

First, I assemble the mosaic without adhesive on its permanent mounting board. When satisfied with the effect—with no more changes to be made—I spread rubber cement on

(Please turn to page 32)



MOSAIC COMPOSITIONS shown are by the author. Articles in CM, she claims, whetted her appetite for this type of ceramic work—and she likes it!

Instead of glaze, the ancient Roman potters commonly used a kind of engobe called *terra sigillata* to finish the surface of their ware. The finish is distinguished by an almost glaze-like density, fine polish, good hardness and resistance to weather; in fact, two-thousand-year-old specimens of the Romans' handsome, durable pottery are still in good condition.

In recent years, quite a bit of research has gone into attempts to duplicate the characteristic rich red color and other good qualities of the Roman finish. Substitutes have been discovered but few have come near to matching the originals. Susan Peterson of Los Angeles, however, has been notably successful in developing engobes which are quite similar to the old *terra sigillata*. Her method is so simple that it is probably the same as that of the ancient potters.

The key is in the fineness of the clay particles that make up the engobe. Mrs. Peterson makes her *terra sigillata* from surface clay. Any surface clay will work well, especially one found in a creek or river bed, she says. Such clays are usually red-iron bearing and fire to a red-orange color which approaches the richness of the Roman slips.

She mixes the clay with water to make a thin slip, then screens it so that roots, leaves and coarse sand may be eliminated. If the slip is ground

in a ball mill for a long time, perhaps for two days, it becomes a better *terra sigillata*. Not all clays require this processing. However, a greater amount of clay must be used for the slip if it is not ground.

Mrs. Peterson deflocculates the slip with silicate of soda, Calgon water softener, soda ash or, best of all, sodium hydroxide. As a deflocculant, sodium hydroxide is best when used in a proportion of 0.15 to 0.30 per cent of the slip.

The slip must be *extremely thin*. To render best results the specific gravity should be 1.2 and this means a mixture that is practically the same as muddy water—with a consistency like that of milk. After it has been thoroughly stirred, it is left to settle for twenty-four hours. At that time, if the slip is a good one, there will be almost no clear water on top; the water will still be muddy because of the very fine, divided particles of clay it contains. The coarser and heavier particles (actually extremely fine particles themselves) will have settled to the bottom of the container. *The top half of the total mixture is the usable part.* It is decanted off while the bottom half is usually thrown away as useless.

The engobe works in its unique way, Mrs. Peterson explains, because the grinding and deflocculating process separates and suspends the thin, almost colloidal, clay disklets in water.

When a pot is dipped in the engobe—only once and quickly—it coats the surface with the finest of clay particles. These lie flat, overlapping each other, in a manner not to be achieved in any other way. These factors are responsible for the unusual final effect.

Terra sigillata is applied to dry, unfired pottery. Working quickly and surely, Mrs. Peterson fills the inside of the pot with the slip (or a regular glaze) and pours off the excess; then she immediately dips the pot in the slip to cover the outer surface (it can be sprayed if dipping is impractical). The pot is left standing to drain until partially dry, which ordinarily takes only a few minutes.

As it dries, the slip takes on a silky sheen—an indication of a good *terra sigillata*. When it has become leather hard (in about five minutes), she rubs the surface gently with her bare hands, thereby producing a beautiful polish with very little effort.

The charm of the engobe is in the satin-smooth polish and the quality of the red color when fired. Actually, the covering is as thin as a layer of tissue paper; if thicker, it would not work better and perhaps would not work at all. Keep the application thin, the Los Angeles potter advises.

Most of the usual decorating techniques can be utilized successfully with *terra sigillata*—sgraffito, wax

AN OLD ROMAN FINISH

TERRA SIGILLATA

by MARY ELLIOTT



Her method of achieving the effect is one of the simplest (see text). A water-thin engobe gives the unique finish.

Susan Peterson shows some of her pots whose terra sigillata finish strongly resembles old Roman pieces.



Susan Peterson tells how to make and use this unique kind of "engobe" on your low-temperature pottery for a rich, red, satin-smooth finish

resist, brush work with stains and glazes, etc. The ware is once-fired and, since the engobe permits bisque-type stacking in the kiln, the operation is particularly economical. Firing at cone 08 to 04 has been found to be the most satisfactory.

Because it is so durable as well as handsome, the finish is a good one for such ware as plant containers, lamp bases, patio ware. It may well be used, also, to enhance the surface of ceramic sculpture.

At the University of Southern California where Mrs. Peterson teaches ceramics, she and her advanced students have been exploring the possibilities of terra sigillata in relation to contemporary ceramics. They have found that very satisfactory results can be obtained when Ball clay is used to make the engobe but that

firing in this case must be at cone 4 or 6. China clays were found to require cone 8 or 10 for a vitrified surface, while black clays worked beautifully at all temperatures.

There are indications that the engobe can be used industrially. Since it is not only durable but can be colored by the addition of finely ground oxides, it offers an inexpensive, practical way of treating tile and brick. It can be used to color either of these materials while at the same time providing a harder, more impervious surface.

Aside from these special explorations with students, Mrs. Peterson finds in terra sigillata a highly effective finish for her own outstanding work as a potter. Her method is amazingly simple—her results, most pleasing to the eye and hand. ●

Susan Peterson is wedded to ceramics. Since her undergraduate days at Mills College, she has been in fascinated and full pursuit of the craft. It has led to advanced training in ceramics at Alfred University where she took the M.F.A. degree and, finally, to teaching (under F. Carlton Ball) at the University of Southern California where she is Associate Professor of ceramics.

She married into the field, too—the industrial side of it—for her husband, Jack Peterson, is a ceramic engineer. "Pete" handles the scientific side of their potting, building and rebuilding the home kiln, wheels, blungers and other equipment as needed.

With their two small daughters, Jill and Jan, the Petersons frequently picnic in the country—beside a creek or river bed where surface clay for terra sigillata can be collected.

JEWELRY from broken green ware

demonstrated by MARC BELLAIRE

Hobby Decorator HOBBY decorators who work exclusively with cast shapes will be pleased to learn that new shapes can be created from old without too much difficulty. They also will be interested to learn that pieces of broken green ware can be put to good use.

The "secret" (if you would call it that) is the use of a coping-saw blade. This tiny saw blade will cut through green ware without chipping or breaking even the smallest piece. For this purpose it is used without the handle and holder. Held and guided with the thumb and forefinger, it can perform the most intricate turns, creating a wide variety of patterns or designs.

Let's follow Marc Bellaire step-by-step as he creates a pendant from a piece of broken green ware.

1. The design to be sawed out is first sketched with pencil on the green ware. Here Mr. Bellaire designs a bird pendant on a piece broken from a green ware platter.

2, 3. The tiny coping-saw blade is used to cut out the design. It is held

between two fingers and is carefully guided around the penciled outline. Short up-and-down strokes work best.

4. Any additional cutting or trimming should be done now. For an added decorative effect, holes are drilled by twirling a sgraffito tool between the fingers. Care is taken to avoid excessive pressure which could crack the delicate green ware.

Careful sponging with a quite-damp sponge, completes the shaping of the pendant and rounds the edges. If the piece is excessively thick, it can be thinned down by stroking it across the face and back with a quite-wet sponge.

5. The final step is the underglaze decorating. The same rules apply here as in painting large shapes. The piece should be carefully cleaned and dampened immediately before decorating. Abstract decorations, in keeping with the stylization, are painted in by Marc Bellaire.

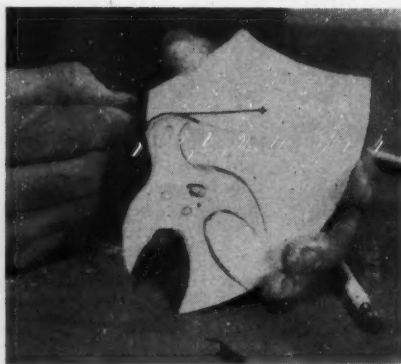
6. Here is the finished pendant after being bisque fired, clear glazed and refired. It can be strung through

the eye for hanging around the neck, or a pin finding can be glued to the back for pinning to a garment. This piece, incidently, was made oversize for the purpose of the demonstration, as you may have noticed when comparing the size of it to Mr. Bellaire's hands. A jewelry item normally would be made somewhat smaller.

There is no end of ideas that can come from this procedure. As you will notice by observing the finished items of jewelry shown on these pages, everything from tiny earrings to multi-piece bracelets and necklaces can evolve. When you create your jewelry, you will no doubt have specific motifs in mind. But don't let this rob you of the fun of letting a broken piece of greenware suggest a motif to you. Study some of your broken green ware carefully, observing the outline as well as the sweeps and curves (if it came from the side of a swelling bowl, for example). Let these shapes "tell you" what to make. And don't try to be too realistic. The technique won't permit fine edge details and hairline precision. Stick to abstract stylizations. ●



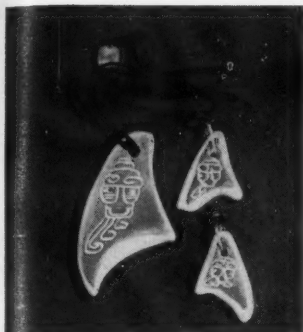
1. Design is sketched in pencil on piece of broken green ware.



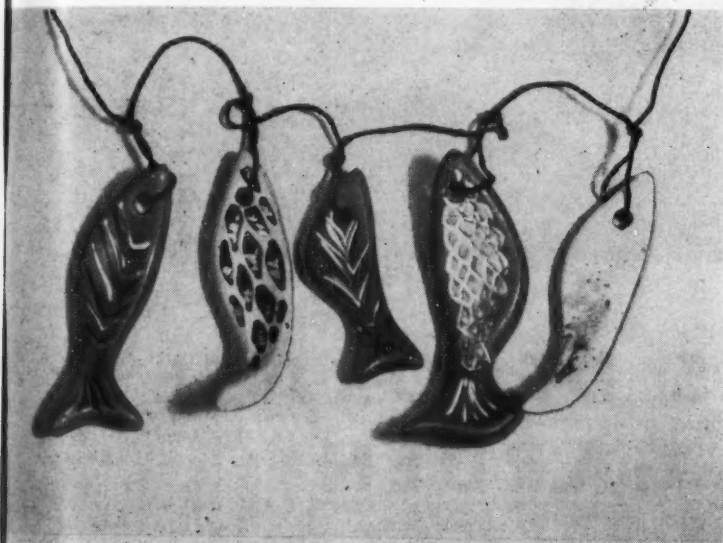
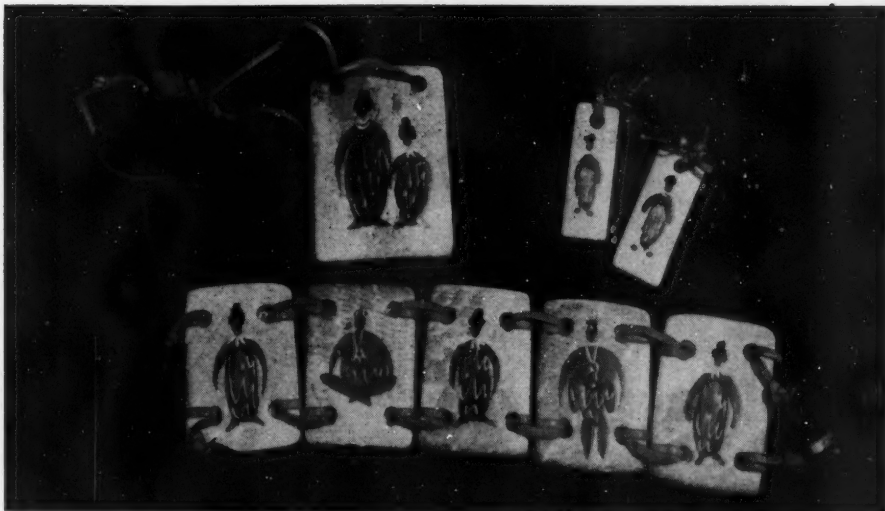
2. Tiny coping-saw blade (without handle) saws around outline.



3. Short up-and-down strokes finish task quickly and safely.



"EVERYTHING from tiny earrings to multi-piece bracelets is possible with this technique," says Marc Bellaire. To prove his point, he makes just such a variety of examples shown on this page.



CURVED pieces, adding a third dimension to the finished article, are particularly effective. The outer edge of a broken bowl was used for the fish necklace at left, the curved section putting action in the tails.



4. Final decorative effects are followed by careful sponging.



5. Abstract decoration is in keeping with stylized shape.



6. Glazed and fired, piece is ready for stringing and wearing.



CERAMICS DECORATE YOUR GARDEN

by NOLA MATSON

Gardening and ceramic-ing are my hobbies and I combine the two in arrangements that give me—and my neighbors—great pleasure. In my landscaped yard, I have set my ceramics among the plantings, beside “pocketpools,” on walls, and wherever else I want to draw the eye. The effect is delightful.

Ground lights and hanging lanterns which hold fat candles are favorites in my garden scene. Such candleholders are very easy to make. The important thing, for the ground lights, is a flat base or pronged foot which will sit securely in the soil or on a flat surface; for the hanging lanterns, a ring or some other provision for suspending them safely.

The shape for either type of light can be round or square, tall or squat, as long as there is space for the kind of candle to be used and an opening for air. Any method of forming the holders is suitable—throwing, slab or coil building, draping over plaster or in cheesecloth, molds, etc.

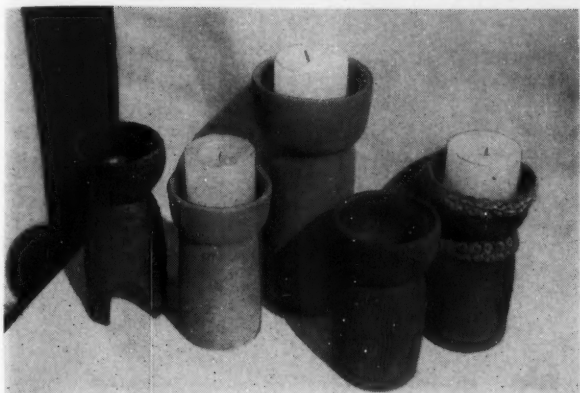
One of my lanterns, shaped like a birdhouse, is hung in a small pine tree planted in a tub. This tub has castors so the whole arrangement can be moved from place to place in the yard. The neighbors like this idea: when they have an outdoor party they borrow the tree with its lantern. They also borrow the ground lights. This pleases me because it means people in general really appreciate the

combination of ceramics and nature.

Candleholders are not the only decorative ceramic element in the garden scheme. Sculpture also has its place. But since outdoor sculpture is usually made on a considerably larger scale than such objects as candleholders, firing the work can present a problem when only a small kiln is available. There is, however, a way around the problem: the sculpture can be made in sections and, when fired, glued together as one piece . . .

Turn the page to see how Nola Matson makes tall sculpture for the garden by the “sectional method.”

GROUND LIGHTS for oversize candles
can be any size or shape—hand formed or wheel thrown.

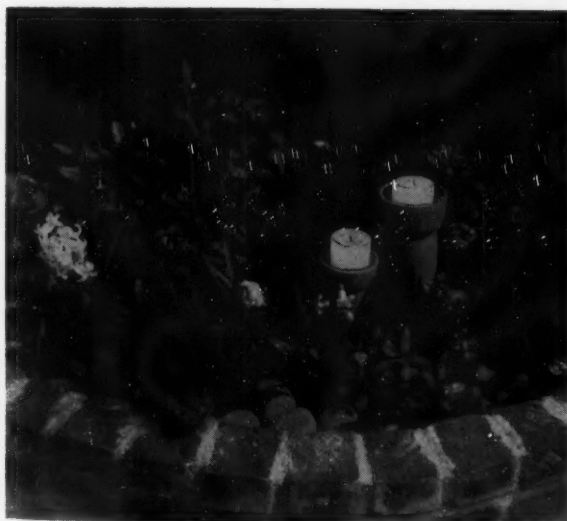


Night and Day . . .

*Candleholders made from clay
provide night time illumination and blend
in nicely with trees and flowers*



HANGING LANTERNS (for high lights)
resemble bird houses. The flat bottoms make them
equally useful for table-level light.



The ground lights shown close up at the top of the page are
illustrated above enhancing a garden setting. In the photo at right,

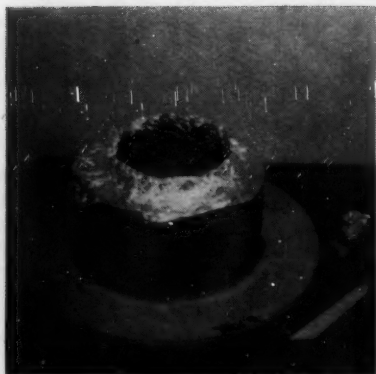


two other types of ground lights are shown. The covered-bowl type
(by Christine Thowson) is electrically wired—no wind problem here.



THIRTY-FOUR INCHES TALL, this figure was fired in a small-size hobby kiln—in sections—the various sections being glued together later.

PUT SCULPTURE OUT



1
Flattened coils were used to build the sectional sculpture. Foil between the sections



2
kept them from sticking during the building and modeling; plastic wrappings prevented



3
too-rapid drying of the lower sections. After details were added, the sections were sep-

**Even a small kiln can
be used for large
ceramic sculpture
by making and firing
the piece in sections**

INDOORS

I wanted to make a figure about 3 feet high for the garden but my average-sized hobby kiln was too small to accommodate a piece that large. So I planned to make the sculpture in five sections which could be fired separately.

Using the coil method, I built up hollow sections one on top of the other. First came the lower skirt; then the mid-skirt, upper-skirt and bust; finally the shoulders-and-head section. This method of building had a distinct advantage since I could see the figure evolve as I worked and make changes accordingly. Throughout the process, I had of course to be sure to allow for shrinkage of the clay so the sections would fit neatly after firing.

Step by step, this is the way the figure was made:

1. I used large, flattened coils of clay and formed the bottom section (lower skirt). A small coil was added at the inner edge of the top rim to provide a ledge to hold the next section in place. The work was then allowed to stand overnight so the clay would become firm enough to stand the weight of the next section. Next day, I fitted aluminum foil around the top so that newly added clay would not stick.

2. Each subsequent section was handled the same way as the first one, except that no ledge was required for the head. A plastic wrapping was used to keep each finished part from drying out too fast as work on the next section progressed.

3. When the basic figure had been completed, details such as the facial features were filled in. Then the arms were added. Meantime, the top of the head was left open and unfinished to give that section a chance to dry somewhat.

4. The next step was to finish the head, do the finer modeling required, and texture the clay surfaces a bit. Then a small coil of clay was worked in a decorative pattern around the top edge of each section to camouflage the joints.

5. When the forming and modeling were finished, I took the figure apart and stripped off the aluminum foil which had separated the sections. To make sure that all parts would have the same drying conditions and to help avoid warping, the sculpture was then reassembled for drying.

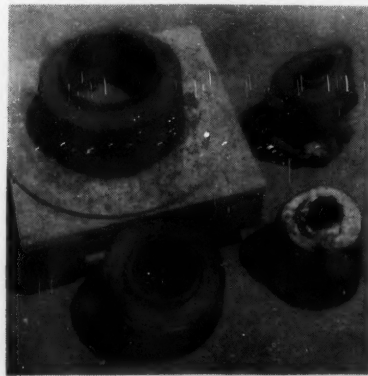
Drying this kind of sculpture is a long, slow process. If you hurry it, you can wind up with a mass of clay humps! I let my figure dry *very* slowly for a month or even longer. After it was considerably more than leather hard, I removed the head so that air could circulate inside and help the drying. (All the sections may be separated at this time—for the same reason.) Finally, the sections were fired separately as planned and then put together once more—this time permanently—with waterproof glue.

The owner of a small kiln can use the sectional method of building for any type of large sculpture. It seems to me a neat solution for outdoor ceramics which tend to be larger than the pieces we make for indoor use. In other words, there is no need for letting a "hobby-sized" kiln keep you from doing grand-scale pieces!

The main point, however, is not the *size* of your outdoor ceramics. They may be sculptured pieces or candleholders or any of innumerable other possibilities. The point is that whatever the form, you will find ceramics go beautifully with nature, even if the setting is the most modest of back yards. ●



4. After the figure was fired, the foil removed, then the pieces reassembled for drying. The completed demonstration sculpture is at the right; another sculpture, in its setting, on the facing page.



5. The next step was to finish the head, do the finer modeling required, and texture the clay surfaces a bit. Then a small coil of clay was worked in a decorative pattern around the top edge of each section to camouflage the joints.



ENAMELING:

CLOISONNE PLAQUES

as demonstrated by NELLY ALLAN



In her three pendants, Nelly Allan used a simple design and a relatively easy cloisonne technique. With this combination, even a beginner can expect success.

Cloisonne enameling — the technique of filling wire-enclosed spaces with enamel colors—is one of Nelly Allan's favorites. She uses it for jewelry, trays and many other accessories. In the photo sequence shown here, we follow her through the process of making a plaque for the top of a box, beginning with a detailed plan on paper and ending with the plaque set permanently in place. The motif she chooses is a pair of dancing figures but the basic method she uses in executing the design is applicable to any motif and to almost any object one might care to make. Whether the plaque is small as for a pendant or larger as for the box top, Nelly likes to frame it with a bezel.

1. Planning the motif: A fully detailed paper sketch is prepared to serve as a working guide. Heavy outlines show where the copper-wire "fences" are to go and the colors for the enclosed spaces are also suggested in the sketch. With one exception the enamels to be used will be opaque: red for the boy's jacket, girl's skirt and bow; blue for trousers and blouse; black for hat and boots; white for stockings and skirt trim; chartreuse for hair. Hands and faces are to be transparent pink.

2. Preparing the wires: The outlines of the sketch call for ten pieces of wire altogether. These are cut from soft, 20-gauge copper wire and bent to shape with nose pliers. If handling makes the wire pop up, it can be set against an iron stake and flattened out again by light tapping with a wooden mallet. As each piece is shaped, it is laid in place on the sketch.

3. Attaching wires to base: The metal base for the cloisonne has been cut from 16-gauge copper and is 3 inches by 2½ inches in size; the back has been counterenameled. The top surface is coated heavily and evenly with flux, but is not yet fired. Now the wire shapes are lifted one by one from the sketch and set carefully in place on the flux-covered base. Eyebrow tweezers make a handy tool for lifting the wires; and support for the working hand helps in this step.

4. Firing wires to flux: After only a couple of minutes of firing, the wires

become embedded in the flux. If, during the process, any of the wires should pop up, they will be quickly pushed down again with two rounded knives. It is better to underfire this time; it may result in a cloudy background but the flux will turn golden and transparent in the second firing.

5. Making ready for enameling: Each enamel color, well washed, is in an individual shallow container (bottle cap). Water (or gum solution) is added, drop by drop from a syringe, and the mixture stirred to a thick paste. Now all is in order for inlaying the enamels. The color sketch and the fired, cleaned plaque stand at the side.

6. Inlaying the enamels: Now the wire-enclosed spaces are filled with wet enamel. These are laid in with a blunt-nosed dental tool, then flattened with the tip of a moistened paintbrush. The areas are built up slightly higher than the wire partitions since enamel sinks in firing. When all the spaces are well filled, the plaque is fired until the enamel becomes glossy.

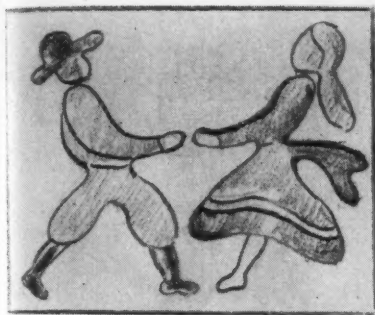
7. Making the bezel: The enameled top is to be set in a bezel, or frame of metal. In this case the bezel consists of a narrow strip of 26-gauge copper (¼-inch wide and about 11 inches long). The strip, after annealing, is bent to fit the plaque.

8. Soldering the bezel: First, the ends of the strip are hard-soldered together; then the bezel is set on the box itself, secured with wire, and soldered permanently in place.

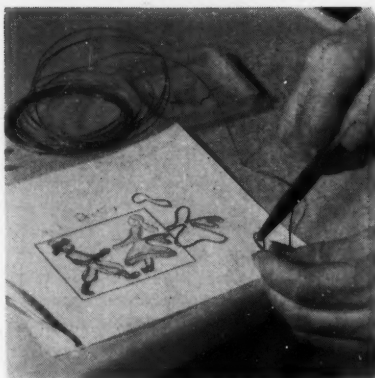
9. Now the plaque is set snugly into the bezel. The bezel is then mitered at the four corners and, with the help of a burnisher, the top edge is turned in on the plaque, holding it securely in place. The last step in the process is a final cleaning of the bezel and the copper wire of the cloisonne.

The completed box top and three of Nelly Allan's pendants are shown on these pages. Notice how she has used the bezel in all cases as a finish and frame for the plaque.

The comparatively easy way of making cloisonne demonstrated here is one in which even the beginner can expect to be successful. ●



1. Line and color sketched on paper



2. Wire cut and bent to shape



3. Shaped wires set on flux-covered base



4. Firing embeds wires in flux



5. Enamel powder is made into thick paste



6. Enamels (colors) are laid in



7. Copper strip is cut for bezel

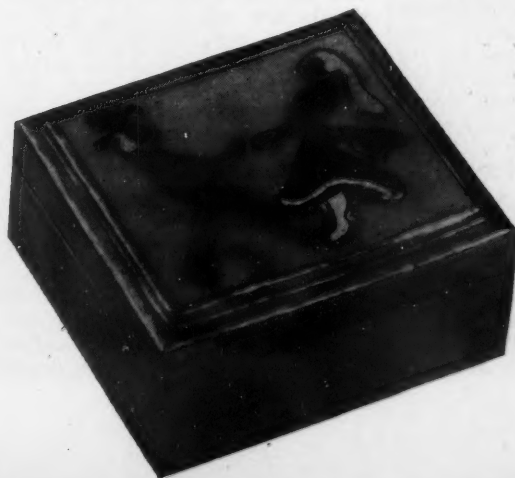


8. Bezel (frame) is soldered to the cover



9. Plaque is set snugly in bezel

Completed box with plaque in place. Note how Nelly Allan uses bezel, on the box and the pendants on the opposite page, as both a finish and frame for her enameled plaques.



Strictly Stoneware

... slips and engobes

by F. CARLTON BALL



THE TERMS, "colored clay slips" and "engobes" are synonymous. A colored clay slip is to all intents and purposes the same as an engobe and vice versa. "Engobe" is a French term meaning *to envelop*.

When a colored slip is used to completely cover a pot, it is called an engobe because it envelops the pot. That being the case, an engobe becomes a "clay slip" when applied only to local areas of a pot. In neither composition nor method of application is there any difference between engobes and colored clay slips.

There are as many compositions of colored slips or engobes as there are potters. In general, the best engobe to use is one made of the same clay as that used to make the pot—with appropriate color and water added to make it into a slip. By following this practice, the problem of fitting the slip to the body is eliminated.

Each kind of clay acts a little different from any other and each clay shrinks differently, so it is quite a task to find one kind of clay that will make a satisfactory engobe for use on another kind of clay. This is especially true if one is seeking a white-clay engobe for a red clay pot.

The easiest solution is to use a buff body; or use a buff clay in the body and color it if the buff color isn't satisfactory. Then the buff clay can be the lightest color in the clay slip and coloring oxides can be added. The lighter colors such as yellow, light blue and light green will look well with a buff clay as the base of the slip, but they would not be good if a red-clay base were used instead for the engobe. There is no problem of the engobe's fitting the clay body because the clay for the engobe is the same as that used for the pot: both will shrink equally during drying and firing.

If it is necessary to make a white engobe which will fit a red clay, there are several ways of going about it. First, try all the white and light-buff clays available to you; make slips of them and put them on the red clay; fire and glaze the tests. Perhaps one of these white clays will fit and your

difficulties will be over. If none of them fit, try the engobes suggested later in this article to see if any of them will do what you wish. And if that fails, choose from among your tests the white clay that came the closest to fitting the red clay and adjust it to fit.

There are materials which can be added to the white clay to cut down its shrinkage, and other materials which will make it shrink even more. Choose a single material or a combination that will make your clay fit.

White clays, each having more or less shrinking capacity, can be added. Kaolins will not shrink much; plastic kaolins will shrink a bit more. Ball clays will shrink a good deal, some of them more than others; and bentonite will shrink very much—probably too much.

Flint is one of the materials which will keep your clay from shrinking as much as it ordinarily would by itself. Fine grog would work the same way but would not be as good an ingredient to use. Feldspar counteracts drying shrinkage but increases firing shrinkage.

The appropriate material, depending on whether you want to increase or counteract shrinkage, should be added to the white clay of the engobe in percentage quantities. For example, if a kaolin is being used for the base material and it doesn't shrink enough, a ball clay could be added in varying amounts—let's say, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25%. After making and firing tests, you should have an engobe which comes closer to fitting; another series of similar tests should completely solve the problem.

If a ball clay is being used as the base material for the engobe and it shrinks too much, run a series of tests with flint added in varying amounts ranging from 5% through 25%. When these tests have been fired with a glaze over them there should be one which is so very close to fitting that it can easily be corrected.

The addition of 5% of powdered borax to your engobe can help it to fit. Borax is soluble so, when a slip containing it is painted on a pot and the slip and pot dry, the borax sets up a thin skin of borax crystals between the surface of the pot and the engobe and this helps the engobe

to adhere. During firing, the borax fuses first and produces a sticky layer of material between the body and the engobe, in this way helping to hold the engobe on the pot in and after firing.

Many stoneware bodies are dark in color. Such bodies give some of the most beautiful of effects especially when decorated with engobes. Dark clay calls for a light-colored engobe; and usually a potter has one that will fit his dark stoneware clay—an engobe that is quite white because of the Ball clay and China clay in it.

If such an engobe is applied heavily it stays white through the glaze firing. But many artist-potters would wish to decorate the pot with direct single brush strokes of the white slip—and this is a highly effective way of enriching the surface. A nice, thick transparent glaze over such a pot *should* be beautiful but frequently the design disappears in the firing and the potter's time has been wasted.

A white-clay-slip design will not disappear nearly as much if a transparent glaze is applied *very thinly* over the pot. There is a disadvantage, however, in using a thin layer of transparent glaze. The pot when fired appears to have been varnished; the beauty that goes with a thick glaze is lost.

This, I think, is what happens: when the glaze is molten in the kiln it dissolves some of the alumina and silica out of the body of the pot and some of the surface of the pot goes into the molten glass of the glaze. If, perchance, the surface of the pot has a nicely painted engobe decoration, it too is absorbed into the glaze and disappears from sight. There may be other or additional reasons for clay slip to lose its opacity, but the important thing is that it does tend to disappear under a glaze especially at stoneware temperatures.

This "fault" in your engobe or clay slip may be corrected by the addition of a percentage of your favorite zirconium opacifier. It is possible to add 50% of zirconium to a batch of engobe and this is the percentage I prefer. Make tests by adding five different amounts of zirconium oxide to your engobe. For the first test, add 10%; the second, 20%; then 30, 40 and

(Please turn to Page 30)



Joseph Trippetti, Manchester, N.H.; top prize in enameling for 5" x 7" cloisonné which also won the Thomas E. Thompson Purchase Award.

SHOW TIME

Fifth Annual Miami National

SINCE IT BEGAN FIVE YEARS AGO, the number of states represented in the Miami National Ceramic Exhibition has grown from 10 in 1953, to 33 this year. More than 650 pieces were submitted to the jury of the Fifth Annual Miami National Ceramic Exhibition, sponsored by the Ceramic League of Miami. The 147 works selected by the judges were exhibited in March at the Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, University of Miami. Following the exhibit, the top 57 pieces from the competition will be circulated among museums and galleries in the South.

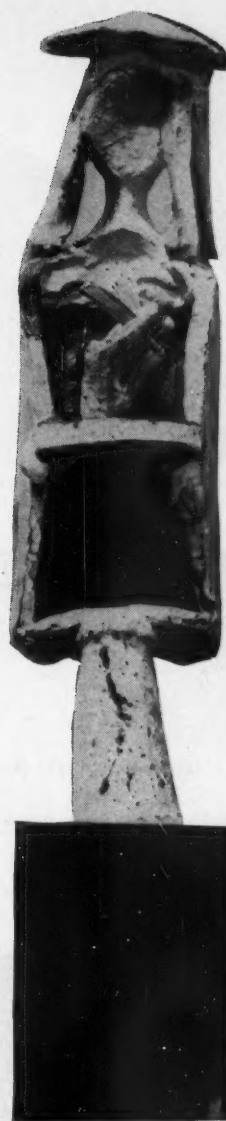
A total of \$2,625 in prize money was awarded to winners in four categories—ceramics, enamels on metal, two-dimensional design, and ceramic sculpture—with several prizes in each category. The \$500 Beaux Arts Purchase Award, the top prize of the show, was given to Paul Soldner of Claremont, Calif. Anne Chapman of Oxford, Miss., won the special earthenware award for her sculpture, "Affinity of Man" (not illustrated). CM's Kathe Berl (The Enameler's Column) received third prize in the enameling division for her bas relief plaque.



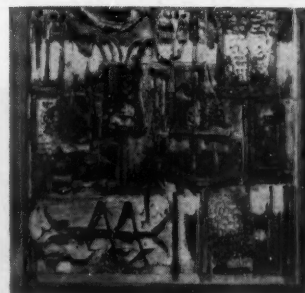
Paul Soldner, Claremont, Calif.; Beaux Arts Purchase Award, top prize in show, for a thrown black and white floor vase, 52" tall.



John Mason, Los Angeles, for 15" vase (left).



"Girl With Folded Hands, by Frans Wildenhain, Rochester, N.Y.; First in ceramic sculpture (21" tall with base).



Frans Wildenhain also won the top award in two-dimensional design for his 21" tile mosaic (above) "Life in the Woods." First prize in the ceramics category went to John Mason, Los Angeles, for 15" vase (left).



POINTS-OF-THE-COMPASS MOTIF—made mosaic style.

make a GARDEN PLAQUE

by MILDRED and VERNON SEELEY

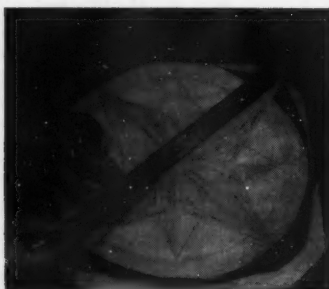
In spring a ceramist's fancy turns to planning decorative pieces for the outdoor scene. Here is a project which can be incorporated as an unusual, attractive element in the patio wall, garden walk or any flat surface. It is a plaque made up of several ceramic shapes—a mosaic, in fact.

The first thing to do is plan the plaque on paper (we chose a points-of-the-compass motif), then make a pattern of the design on strong paper such as wrapping paper.

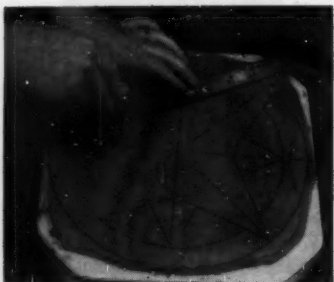
Now we proceed to make the plaque itself. (In the step-by-step photos, incidentally, you will see three different motifs being worked on. This was for photographing convenience; we hope it will not prove confusing.)



1. Slip poured into clay dam on bat



2. Design traced with pencil



3. Sharp knife used to cut clay



4. Pieces ready for bisque firing



5. Sections glued with tile cement



6. Grout worked into all cracks

1. With modeling clay, build a half-inch-high dam around the edge of a large plaster bat (or use a mold with a flat side). Pour slip on the bat to a depth of $\frac{3}{8}$ inch—the dam will prevent it from leaking out. Be sure the slip lies level so that the slab it makes will be equally thick throughout.

2. When the clay slip has hardened enough place the paper pattern on it. Trace the design with a pencil, using enough pressure to indent the clay. Use a ruler as an aid in making straight lines. When the tracing is finished, remove the pattern carefully.

3. Following the outline, cut through the clay to the plaster with a sharp knife, cutting straight up and down (pieces fit together better if not cut on a slant). The ruler is a help here, too, in keeping lines straight.

If desired, the clay may be textured or imprinted at this point. Do not remove the cut sections, however, until they are dry enough to release easily from the plaster; in other words, leather hard. Now they may be smoothed as needed with a damp sponge.

To make it easier to put the plaque together later, it is a good idea to

(Please turn to page 34)

Q *Answers to* Questions

conducted by KEN SMITH

Q. A small image sculptured in soap was sent to me with the request that I make a plaster mold from it. I fear that it cannot be done successfully because of the soap clogging the pores of the mold. What is your opinion?

A. Good news for the soap carver—it is doubtful that the soap will harm the plaster mold in any way. After all, professional mold makers use soft soap as a parting compound.

You might wish to polish the soap carving with a cloth to get a good smooth even finish and then pour plaster directly on it. It should release quite easily.

Q. Can the prepared dry clay body I use for making casting slips be used to produce a plastic clay for hand modeling sculpture and pottery?

A. A clay body made specifically for casting will not usually be as plastic as one made for modeling. It may also already have deflocculent added, which would tend to make it less workable. It can be used, however; why don't you try it and see if you can get satisfactory results?

Q. I am making sculpture for use out-of-doors. Is a special finish required to prevent it from weathering?

A. The piece must be waterproofed to prevent it from suffering damage during freezing weather. The best way, of course, is to be sure the clay body is extremely well vitrified and to glaze it. Surface finishes other than glaze will also prove satisfactory. These include plastic materials, wax and others.

The important thing, if I may repeat, is to be sure the body is well vitrified.

Q. I have made "jewels," as recommended by Jo Rebert in the "Copper Enameling Handbook" and have difficulty because of the kiln wash sticking to the backs of the mounds of glass. This is most difficult to clean off; do you have any suggestions?

A. We have asked Mrs. Rebert and she suggests that perhaps you are using too thick a kiln wash; she uses a kiln wash thinned to the consistency of a water color. Overfiring can cause this difficulty too.

Mrs. Rebert stores her glass jewels in water for some time before using them which may make the removal of the kiln wash easier. The few jewels which are difficult to clean might better be thrown away.

Q. Can you tell me where to buy the liquid rubber latex used for the rubber resist decorating technique. I haven't been able to find it listed in my collection of supplier's catalogues.

A. This material is available from most of the supply houses under readily recognizable names such as rubber resist, rubber latex, liquid rubber, etc. Some companies have developed their own trade names for this same type of material. These names usually incorporate the word "mask." For example Ceramichrome calls theirs *Tranz-mask*, Mayco is *Mayco-mask*, etc.

All subscriber inquiries are given individual attention at CM; and, out of the many received, those of general interest are selected for answer in this column. Direct your inquiries to the Questions Editor; please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

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Itinerary

(Continued from page 10)

KENTUCKY, LOUISVILLE through April

Exhibit of work by residents of Kentucky
and Southern Indiana, sponsored by the
Art Center Association, at the J. B.
Speed Art Museum. Crafts and sculp-
ture included.

MARYLAND, BALTIMORE through April 21

Regional Exhibit for Artists and Crafts-
men at Baltimore Museum of Art.

MICHIGAN, MUSKEGON May 5-May 26

"New England Crafts," Smithsonian In-
stitution Traveling Exhibition, at the
Hackley Art Gallery.

NEW HAMPSHIRE, DURHAM April 8-30

New Hampshire Arts and Crafts Exhi-
bition (contemporary) at University of
New Hampshire Library.

NEW YORK, BUFFALO through April 14

23rd Annual Exhibition, Artists of Wes-
tern New York (14 counties), at Al-
bright Art Gallery, Buffalo Fine Arts
Academy.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

April 3-13

"Ceramics '57, Home—Office—Show-
room," exhibition at the Greenwich
House Pottery, 16 Jones St.

OHIO, CUYAHOGA FALLS May 17-19

Ohio District Ceramic & Hobby Show
at the Chesterfield Hotel Inn.

OHIO, TOLEDO

May 5-May 26

39th Annual Exhibition of Toledo Area
Artists, sponsored by the Toledo Federa-
tion of Art Societies, at the Toledo
Museum of Art.

Strictly Stoneware

(Continued from page 26)

50%; and brush the five engobes on
a pot. Try several transparent glazes
over them to see which engobe is the
most desirable and dependable.

A zirconium opacifier works very
well in most engobes without disturb-
ing the fit and the clay slip remains
white under a thick layer of transpar-
ent glaze. Because of this, a white en-
gobe can be brushed in single strokes
over a dark clay body, in a beautiful
decorative manner, and the glazing
and firing in an oxidation or reduc-
tion atmosphere will not ordinarily
destroy the design.

To make an engobe handle in a
better way, to make it flow from the
brush in a more silky fashion, a little
glycerine can be added to the engobe.
If you find glycerine too expensive or
difficult to obtain, try some corn
syrup or honey in the slip—either will
improve its painting quality.

The following are some of the base

Big annual hobby-trade shows of the
ceramic field will be held this year at
Asbury Park and Chicago in May. On
these occasions manufacturers and
dealers put on display, for the benefit
of hobbyists, all that is new and/or
useful in the way of supplies and equip-
ment—glazes and underglazes, enamels,
kilns, molds, tools, brushes, etc. Con-
current with each show is a competitive
exhibition with prizes and a wide range
of classes.

EASTERN CERAMIC HOBBY SHOW Convention Hall, Asbury Park, N.J. May 4-9

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petitive exhibit.

GREAT LAKES CERAMIC HOBBY EXHIBITION Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago May 26-30

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er's Association Trade exhibits, dem-
onstrations, competitive exhibit.

PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA May 17-June 9

"Trends in Philadelphia Sculpture" ex-
hibition sponsored by the Philadelphia
Art Alliance, 251 South Eighteenth St.
Sculpture in all media.

WASHINGTON, SEATTLE May 1-May 22

"American Jewelry and Related Ob-
jects," Smithsonian Institution Traveling
Exhibition, at the Seattle Historical
Society.

WISCONSIN, MILWAUKEE April 28

Annual Ceramic Hobby Exposition pre-
sented by the Badger Ceramic Associa-
tion at Mitchell Park Pavillion, 524 S.
Layton Blvd. Work of Wisconsin hobby-
ists.

engobes which can be used on stone-
ware (cone 6-11):

#1 White Engobe	
Edgar plastic kaolin	34.0%
Feldspar	17.0%
Flint	17.0%
Bentonite	3.4%
Zircopax	28.6%
#2	
Nepheline syenite	20.0%
Kaolin	25.0%
Ball clay	20.0%
Flint	30.0%
Borax	5.0%
#3	
Edgar plastic kaolin	25.0%
Imperial ball clay	20.0%
F4 Feldspar	20.0%
Flint	30.0%
Borax	5.0%

Next Month—Mr. Ball will continue his
discussion of engobes and clay slips. He
will present additional recipes for engobes,
amounts and kinds of coloring oxides for
different colors, recipes for covering glazes,
and other fundamental and practical in-
formation.



Naturalistic China Painting: Light and Shadow

(Part 3)

by ZENA HOLST



Mrs. Holst's light and shadow series began in January when she explained color values. Last month she gave some helpful hints on shadows and ways of achieving a three-dimensional effect. In her concluding article this month, she discusses highlights. —Ed.

Highlights

Highlights seldom are left pure white in the final finish but are softened with subtle tints when the object is ready for the last firing. The values of these tint colors depend on the intensity of the basic color in that area. The highest point of the center mass, even though the design seldom is placed in the center of the plate, is the area that is painted last for each firing. This area contains the most prominent highlights. Tips and edges of any leaves or petals that are in the upper section of the study are also strongly highlighted.

The method of holding highlights in china painting is the same as that used by water colorists (I first design all my original studies for china painting with water colors. Experiments in washes of black and gray values on white paper are good practice for the beginner in naturalistic painting.) There is no white in mineral pigments for painting the highlights on china, although there is a white enamel that is sometimes used for final relief details such as white fuzz in the centers of certain flowers. Too much added enamel, however, detracts from the naturalistic idea.

Second Firing

For the second firing, the background should be extended over the entire area around the design, covering the plate completely. In order to bring the painting together as a whole, use tints and soft hues, which are related to the colors in the mass of the study, for the outer areas. Darken the shadow reflections where needed. A certain unevenness and freedom should prevail in the background when a variety of tones from sunlight to shadow is used, but the colors will need blending with a silk pad (for instructions on using a silk pad, see October 1955). Pat the

lightest tints first and progress into the darkest shadows, then brush out reflection lines very quickly before the colors "set." Use an open (slower-drying) medium for mixing background colors and for applying (refer to "Mediums," July 1954). If the first undertaking is not entirely satisfactory do not hesitate to wipe the whole thing off and start over. Trying to retouch a wet background makes a messy job; any portion may, however, be retouched for the following firing.

The final step in preparation for the second firing is to paint over the leaves and flowers with thin washes of the colors necessary to bring out the forms. Be sure to retain the contrast of light and shadow in the contours of the lines. Intense hues in certain parts of the petals of the flowers will need strengthening for more depth, especially if the petals are cup shaped.

Subsequent Firings

Finishing details such as centers of blossoms should be left for the third firing. A second coat of gold can also be applied to the rim at this time. If the floral study should be in intense hues the plate may need as many as five firings. No matter how many firings, however, preparation for the last one should consist of light washes and a flushing of one tone into another to bring the whole into harmony. It may be necessary to strengthen some of the reflected shadows more than once but most beginners have a tendency to make these too strong; if so, they can be modified to a certain degree with thin washes of a contrasting or harmonizing color (yellow-green over dark green, lavender over blue, pompadour over rose, gray over purple, etc.). Both the modifying and intensifying of colors may be done by the dry-dusting method if one is proficient in the technique.

For those who have progressed beyond their first plate, I will add that shadow colors in the background are not always confined to the areas close below or around the study. The size

(Please turn to page 32)



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Mosaics

(Continued from page 15)

wide strips of brown wrapping paper and carefully lay them, tacky side down, over the mosaic. The strips are overlapped and brought firmly over all edges of the board so that the tesserae will be entirely enclosed and stay exactly in place. Then I lay a board of the same overall size on top and flip the whole unit over (if the

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White lead	52%
Zinc oxide	2
Whiting	3
Feldspar	16
Borax	2
Kaolin (EPK)	18
Flint	7

Mix all ingredients, add 1/4 cup gum solution and hot water to blend; force through 100-mesh sieve.

Yellow: add from 5 to 10 percent rutile for various shades.

Green: add 1 to 3 percent copper carbonate, plus 2 to 4 percent iron oxide, plus 8 percent zircopax.

Blue: add 0.3 percent nickel oxide, 0.3 percent copper oxide, 0.25 percent cobalt oxide, 8 percent zircopax.

Note: Liquid underglazes used as colorant with this glaze produce excellent results.

mosaic is large, the boards with tesserae between have to be clamped together in several places so that nothing can slip).

Now the permanent mounting board is removed, spread with adhesive and replaced on the upside-down tiles. As soon as the mastic has set slightly, the unit can be flipped right side up once more. Then the extra board is removed and the tacky paper carefully peeled off the tesserae. With that step the mosaic is finished except for grouting and framing. •

Overglaze Page

(Continued from page 31)

and contour of the china object as well as the arrangement of the decoration pattern are taken into consideration. A tall vase or lamp, for example, may show much depth of reflected colors toward the base as a way of achieving balance in the perspective of design and object.

To summarize the fundamental rules: first do the shadow painting in the background in order to bring out the lines of the design; then shade the leaves and flowers into contour forms by retaining plenty of highlights. The painting for each succeeding firing should be built up gradually. •

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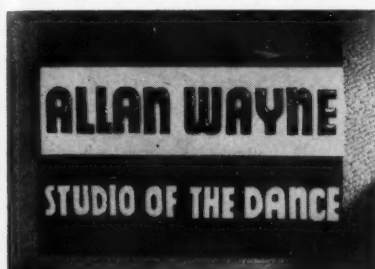
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MAKE A NAME PLATE

Even if you aren't ready to hang out your own shingle as a professional enameler, you may be ready to enamel a name plate for your home, office or studio.

In Europe, raised enameled lettering is often used for store signs and name plates but for some reason or

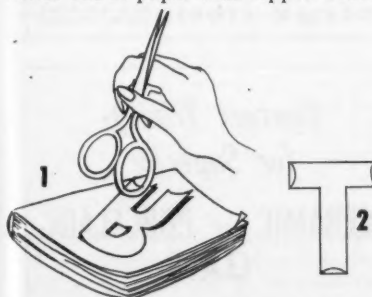


Name plate with enameled lettering—made by Kathie Berl as a "house-warming" gift for a friend.

other it is not seen much in this country. This is a pity . . . Such signs can be very handsome indeed. So I am going to share my experience in this technique with you.

Letters of the alphabet may be formed individually, enameled, and then assembled in words. Or whole words may be made in one piece—if the type of lettering is appropriate and the kiln big enough to accommodate the piece. With glazing putty, the lettering is attached permanently to plate glass.

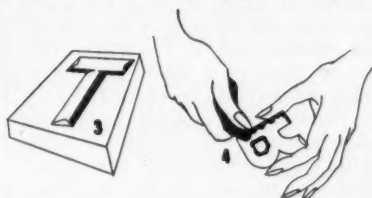
Using a pair of scissors, cut the letters out of paper-thin copper. Place



them face down on layers of newspaper or an old book; then with the rounded end of the scissors' handle, mold each letter until it is nicely

rounded or "raised" (1). Now "close" or finish the letters by pressing a half-moon-shaped line into each open end (2). On the capital T, for example, both ends of the horizontal bar and the bottom of the vertical bar would be closed. Use the handle of the scissors for this too. Turn the letters over on a straightening plate and, still using the scissors, even up all the edges so that each letter sits absolutely level on a flat surface (3). Now they are ready for enameling (on both sides).

Glazing putty is used for fastening the letters permanently to glass. This is a handy way to apply it: Hold a



letter face down in one hand, a piece of putty in the other. Drag the putty across the inside edges of the letter, scraping off small portions of putty as you go (4). After putty has been applied all around the edges, press the letter firmly onto the glass.

Surplus putty which escapes from under the letter will have to be removed. Sever it from the enamel first by tracing the outline of the letter



with a pointed tool (5). Now dust the whole area with talcum powder to absorb the moisture in the putty and prevent it from sticking. Use a stiff brush to whisk both putty and powder off the surface.

When all the lettering has been
(Please turn to page 34)

coming up in CM

Kenneth Bates on ENAMELING

The editors of CM are proud to announce a new series on enameling.

Written exclusively for **Ceramics Monthly** by Kenneth Bates, one of the world's foremost authorities on the subject, it covers three of the more difficult techniques—Cloisonne, Plique-a-jour, and Champleve. The carefully prepared, detailed texts disclose this master enamelist's procedures and techniques which he has accumulated through many years of personal experience.

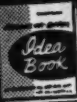
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Garden Plaques

(Continued from page 28)

mark the underside of the sections and the paper pattern with corresponding numbers.

4. After bisque firing, glaze the top surfaces and remove all traces of the glaze from the sides and undersides. Now the pieces may be glaze fired.

5. Assemble the sections in proper position and glue them to a hard board or similar material, leaving about 1/32 inch between each one. Use ceramic cement as the adhesive and work from the center out.

6. When the glue is completely dry, we are ready for grouting. First, thoroughly dampen the tile with a sponge to keep the grout from drying out too rapidly before setting. Fill the spaces between tiles with the grout, working it well into all cracks and wiping off excess with a damp cloth. Then cover the plaque with a damp cloth and let it stand overnight.

The finished plaque may be im-

(Please turn to page 36)

Enameler's Column

(Continued from page 33)

mounted on glass, forget it for a few days while the putty hardens. (If the glass background is a vertical one, such as glass in a door, some temporary support will be needed to keep the letters from slipping before the putty hardens (6). Strips of cardboard, taped under each line of lettering, can be used for the purpose.)



Once the putty hardens, the letters will hold to the glass forever and a day.

A name plate which is to be attached to a wall will, of course, have holes for screws. Perhaps you do not want these to show, so I will give you just one idea of what can be done to camouflage these holes.

In designing the sign, you could plan to have a plaque of black glass screwed to the wall (7) and a narrow plaque of white glass added to cover the holes (putty will hold glass to glass). You could have a line of black lettering on the white glass and, on the black panel, additional lettering in white . . . very effective!

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people, places & things

MEET OUR AUTHORS:

■ **Sally Gallaway** is a hobby potter who takes her hobby seriously, though not without some experimentation. This spirit has led to discoveries of simplified methods and techniques such as those in her current article on mosaics.

In the matter of glazing, Sally says, . . . "Not having a teacher to turn to, I studied everything and . . . learned not to be afraid to mix things together and stick them in the kiln."

Mrs. Gallaway followed her own philosophy in a CM article, "Mix Your Own Glazes," (June, 1955). Writing in a non-technical style, Sally recommended using kitchen utensils and a nylon stocking for glaze-making equipment.

In the same spirit, this month she presents her simplified method for making and assembling mosaics. In addition to experimenting with new processes and methods, Hoosier Sally finds time to take part in, and win prizes in, local competitions and the Indiana State Fair.

■ "I'm a hobbyist, that's what!" says **Nola Matson** of Castro Valley, Calif. Mrs. Matson enjoys gardening as well as "ceramic-ing." Presently she is landscaping her yard with pink roofing rock, Hawaiian tree ferns and pocket pools. "I use ceramic things right on the ground, and what an atmosphere they give!" she says.

A modern grandmother who has always been interested in art, Mrs. Matson began working with clay in 1948. Since then her work has won 12 blue ribbons and three sweep stakes at state and county fairs. For several years she has taken summer courses in ceramics at Mills College. When she isn't

working with clay, she busies herself collecting antiques and dolls.



■ **Nelly Allan**, a newcomer to the columns of CM, was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia and studied there for six years at the School of Fine Arts. She also has studied at various schools in the United States.

Presently Mrs. Allan is an art instructor in a Chicago School. She also conducts classes in enameling and silversmithing at the Oak Park Art League, Y.M.C.A. and Elmwood Park High School.

She began working with enamels about five years ago, and had a head start when enameling caught the public's fancy in 1954. Since then, Mrs. Allan has had many exhibits in the Chicago area. In December, "People and Places" magazine carried an article with colored illustrations about her work.

■ **Bim and Doris Newman** began collecting antique pottery while operating a craft shop in an upstate New York summer resort. More than just collectors, the Newmans also have an interest in pottery-making which stems from a 1952 lecture series given by Leach, Hamada, and Yanagi in New York. At the present time, they are enrolled in ceramics classes at the Brooklyn Museum.

■ Biographical sketches of F. Carlton Ball, Kathe Berl, Zena Holst, and Marc Bellaire—familiar names in CM—have appeared in previous issues.

SHOW PLACE RENOVATED: Thorough remodeling of the Old State Capital at Baton Rouge makes it a better place for the arts and crafts exhibitions held there, reader **Paul E. Cox** reports. The galleries, maintained by the **Louisiana Art Commission**, are on the second floor of the historic building. **Jay R. Broussard** is director. The Art Commission is unique. Created in 1938 to promote "enjoyment of art as an integral part of daily life," it is an official state agency with its activities supported entirely by state appropriations.

OREGON CERAMIC STUDIO of Portland, Ore. has asked CM to announce that the **Eighth Annual Exhibition of Northwest Ceramics**, sponsored jointly with the Creative Art Foundation of Oregon, will not be held in 1957. However, the groups plan to hold a competition next year.

CERAMICS IN COLOR TV: Ceramics, from the making of a mold through decorating, were dramatized in color TV at Detroit in March as a feature of Steve Booth's "Hobbies in Action" program, Channel 4 WJW-TV. **Doris Moehead**, manager of the **Kay Harrison Studios**, where the show was filmed, played the role of demonstrator.

NEW HOBBY SHOW: The First Annual Wichita Ceramic Art Show sponsored by the **Wichita Ceramic Art Society** will be held at the Kansas National Guard Armory, 620 North Edgemoor (April 24-28).

Amateurs are eligible to compete in any of the 12 categories which include hand modeling, wheel work, sgraffito, enameling on metals, and a junior division for hobbyists under 17. In addition to the ribbons and cash awards in each category, ribbons

(Please turn to page 36)

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Ceram-Activities

(Continued from page 35)

and prizes also will be awarded for the best and most unusual entries in the show.

Entry blanks and further information may be obtained from the Society, 4421 East Second Street.

ASBURY PARK HOBBY SHOW

Anniversary Celebration: Celebrating its fifth year as an active and successful ceramic organization, **Ceramic Leagues, Inc.** will hold an open house 10:30 a.m., May 6, at the Hotel Berkeley-Carteret, Asbury Park, N.J.

Everyone attending the 5th Annual Ceramic Hobby Show may attend the program which will be built around the theme, "A Community of Ceramic Interests." There will be no charge for admission. In addition to the program, there will be drawings for over 30 valuable prizes of ceramic merchandise — molds, glazes, brushes, slip, tools, etc.

Demonstrations on all phases of ceramics will be conducted by exhibitors during the Asbury Park ceramic show. The demonstrations will be held in the Conference Room of Convention Hall which has been reserved solely for this purpose. A bulletin board and program notes will be used to inform visitors of the demonstrations. These listings will be supplemented by announcements over the public address system.

"**Ceramicchrome Theatre**," a program of movies, colored slides, lectures and demonstrations on all phases of ceramic hobby work, will be held from May 4-9 on the Promenade. Sponsored by **Ed Greenstreet**, manufacturer of Ceramicchrome Products, the program will feature a staff of demonstrators including **Chula Kolb** of San Antonio, Texas; **Gertrude Oakes** of Melrose, Mass; **Cecile Grotton** and **Jill Bouchard** of Hartford, Conn.; **Carol Ann Burke** of Freeport, L.I.; **Gladys Meier** of Rochelle Park, N.J.; and **Ed and Esther Greenstreet**, and **Lucille and Andy Henderson** of Ceramicchrome.

Tickets for the Ceramicchrome program may be obtained from Booths 16, 17, 32, 33, 48 and 49 on the main floor of the Promenade. Next Month, full details on the Great Lakes show (Chicago, May 26-30) will be presented.

Garden Plaques

(Continued from page 34)

bedded permanently in a large cement disk. This serves the double purpose of setting off the piece and providing a protective frame. (For our disks we used 40 pounds of a cement mixture and, as a mold, the top of a large carton.)

These plaques can take their place in just about any level spot. They can be set into a garden walk or even placed in the ground-level with the turf; they can be incorporated in a wall or terrace. As for motifs and color arrangements, there is no end to the variety possible. ●

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Patronize **CM** Advertisers

Announcing the 1957 Great Lakes Ceramic Hobby Exhibition

Chicago, Ill.—May 26, 27, 28, 29, 30



This year the Great Central Ceramic League invited the Great Lakes Exhibition to make Chicago its site for the 1957 Show. The invitation was accepted and the Great Central Ceramic League will be the acting host with the Michigan Ceramic Dealer's Association as a joint sponsor. The Conrad Hilton, the world's largest hotel, with its marvelous facilities will be the background for the 1957 show.

Conrad Hilton, Chicago

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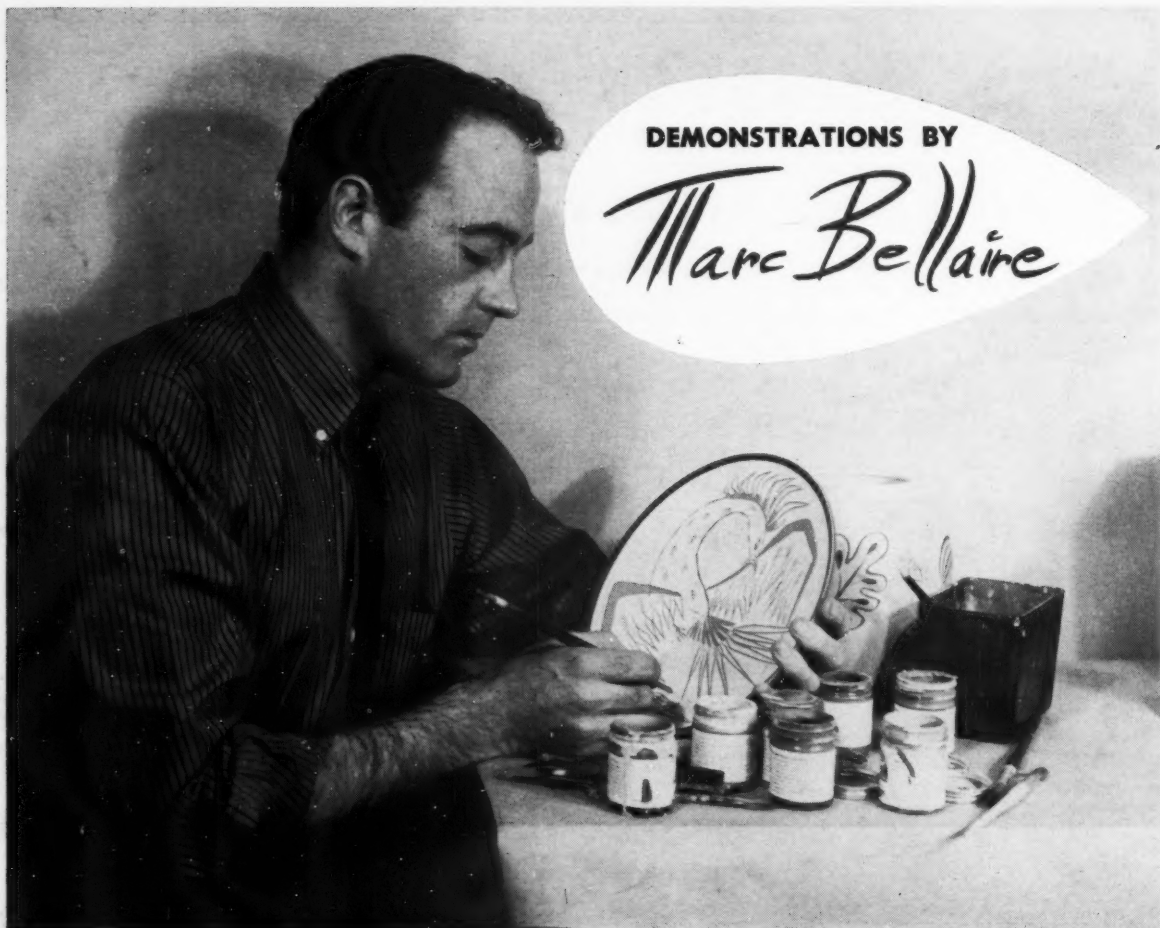
1. Shake hands with ceramists from all parts of the country.
2. Laugh with Gladys Workman and her gang at the opening luncheon. (Reservations necessary)
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